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# Action Guidelines

Ingredients



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# i-SME

# Action Guidelines

## Theory-based ingredients to organise an event

Guidelines for organising events to increase the intrinsic motivation of SMEs to be open for applicants with a disability and to hire persons with a disability.

## The ingredients

Here you find the list of all ingredients that you can use to plan and organise your event.

Read them carefully, depending on the event, you can make use of different ingredients.

**Be creative in using them, the more you include the more chance on a successful event!**

### 1 When starting to organise

- ★ Let 'peers' of your audience officially organise the meeting.

### 2 When inviting

- ★ Always use personal greeting when contacting the individuals in the audience.
- ★ Include a message that meets their needs and interests; this can differ, depending on your audience. They might expect to find answers on their needs, they might expect to have a nice moment because they meet their peers, they might look forward to listening to an interesting speaker, they might come because they enjoy the location, the foods, drinks, or ... any other reason that attracts them to come. Ensure you know why they come and ensure to include a clear 'what is in it for me' message in your invitation.
- ★ Package the message nicely: use an attractive message, use a catchy name, a nice design, it will make those invited more open for the message, and they will think more positive about the message.

### 3 The location of an event

- ★ Organise the event in places where the audience usually 'likes to be'.
- ★ If possible, organise the event in a place where the 'good practice', i.e., the desired behaviour can be viewed by the audience.
- ★ Even better, organise the event, where the good practice is done by somebody your audience know and really respect.
- ★ Ensure the environment is clean, quiet, 'looking good' and pleasant.
- ★ Ensure a 'warm welcome' starting from the first invitation, via the itinerary to the event location, parking, entrance, vestuary, etc.

### 4 Whom is best to speak?

- ★ In any case: Give 'peers' a prominent role in the meeting, then your audience can identify with the speaker.
- ★ Include an expert speaker who is regarded as 'an authority'.
- ★ Include an expert speaker who knows 'practice'.
- ★ Include a speaker that is trusted and respected by the audience, that can really show the desired behaviour. Include more than one, if possible. Let them pay attention to 'all those they know and show the desired behaviour and are happy with it'.
- ★ Better, when all these speakers have a sympathetic character.
- ★ And, even better, when the speakers are attractive.

### 5 What should be in general in the message?

- ★ Use simple and positive messages: check them beforehand with your audience.
- ★ Ensure to limit the presented information, keep it simple and very clear and short.
- ★ Always deliver messages as 'an advice' for the audience, never try to 'sell' something to your audience.
- ★ Let the 'authority' expert inform the audience with facts and figures as objective as possible, including the pros and cons of the 'desired behaviour'.
- ★ Let the expert speaker who knows 'practice' give clear, simple and specific information related to the desired behaviour, including the pros and cons in 'practical terms'.
- ★ Let the speaker that is trusted and respected by the audience show the desired behaviour and tell his story.
- ★ Only provide the audience with 'certainties', avoid as much as possible information containing uncertainties.

### 6 What should be in the message when organising an event for an audience that is really interested?

- ★ Show in a very specific way how the desired behaviour looks like, make it simple and easy to understand.
- ★ Show the audience a plan, with small steps, simple to carry out, to come to the desired behaviour.
- ★ Create simple and feasible 'action perspectives' for the audience; decide together with the audience about simple and feasible 'action perspectives'.
- ★ Include choices in these action perspectives, create different ways to reach the desired behaviour.
- ★ Give the audience specific hints and pointers, it will give them the confidence that they will be able to perform the desired behaviour.
- ★ Present the audience tools that are simple and easy to work with when carrying out the desired behaviour.
- ★ Provide the audience with simple and easy to understand materials, instructions and tools that support them when carrying out the desired behaviour.
- ★ Offer the audience support by means of courses, workshops, guidance, advice etc. to enable them to carry out the desired behaviour. Inform them where to be to get it, and what to expect.
- ★ Create an assurance of 'having the freedom to stop' if wanted.

### 7 How to interact with the audience?

- ★ Create active interactions with the audience. Use the interactions to hear their opinion.
- ★ Let them make their own decisions, prevent situations where they are forced to carry out the desired behaviour.
- ★ Give the audience the opportunity to draw their own conclusions.
- ★ Recognise the resistance and be open for it and mention it; the better the messages and the speakers, the less the resistance. Always look for ways to provide the audience with satisfying answers. Use arguments that match with the needs of the audience.

### 8 What to include in the programme?

- ★ Start with bringing the audience in a good mood, you can also use entertainment.
- ★ Include speakers bringing into view objective information, practical information and real-life examples.
- ★ Let the audience practice with small parts of the desired behaviour and compliment them when they succeed.
- ★ Give all individuals of the audience the opportunity and space to give their opinion.
- ★ Stimulate the audience to be positively open about the desired behaviour, the more the better.
- ★ Create situations where the audience make a commitment 'in the open'. Give the floor to those who commit strongly, let them repeat the commitment while they see themselves.

### 9 What to do in general and important for success

- ★ Do everything needed to create positive feelings within the audience, it creates sympathy and trust and optimism towards the desired behaviour. Ensure all directly involved in the contacts with the audience to act friendly and pleasant. Avoid time pressure in the event, avoid noise, prevent boredom.
- ★ Ensure the messenger, who is asking for cooperation, shows the desired behaviour himself, or can prove he really acts in line with the desired behaviour.
- ★ Repeat the message many times, in the same way and in different ways.
- ★ Always focus on the values of your audience, they are the starting point of each behaviour, of their habits and openness for new behaviour. Ask the audience to be open about their values. Let the audience feel proud on their values and connect them with the desired behaviour; show the alignment with their values..
- ★ Make use of storytelling, especially the speaker who shows the desired behaviour. Use only positive and empowering stories, in which there is a 'problem' and in the end, the problem is solved.
- ★ Make use of 'empowering' words related to people with disabilities, 'added value' words related to the working situation, 'winning' words related to the employer who 'has the guts' to undertake action.
- ★ Give the audience something, they want to give something back.

### 10 If possible, include the following

- ★ Do something with opinions, in a pleasant and interactive way. Your audience often has 'an opinion' about specific subjects and based on this opinion, they 'act'. Use pleasant ways to make the audience aware their current way of acting is based on these 'opinions' and show they are other ways to think about the same subject
- ★ Find out these opinions and prepare the pleasant ways to show another way of thinking. For instance, the opinions of employers is that people with a disability costs a lot of money because of their need for assistive devices. In reality we know the costs for assistive devices are quite low, often only time and hour adaptation is needed. Etc. Gather as much facts as possible to 'counteract' these opinions, in a pleasant way.
- ★ Find out what characterises your audience. Think of places they like to frequent, people they 'admire', their concerns, their needs, their interests, their way of hiring, their values. For instance, owners of SMEs often have a high level of responsibility, have strong values about 'what is important in life', mostly have concerns about the business, etc. Use this information when building the programme of the event and including the ingredients.
- ★ Bring 'those with the desired behaviour' in close contact with 'those on their way to the desired behaviour' and let them talk to each other about the desired behaviour.

### 11 After the meeting

Ensure you keep your promises made during the meeting:

- ★
  - contact employers within the range of time as promised
  - send information as promised
  - visit those you promised to visit
  - etc. etc., important is: just keep them!
- ★ If possible: Create groups that work together on the desired behaviour. Choose channels to share that are used by the individuals of the group, of the audience. This can be social media, LinkedIn, local websites, app groups, private newsletters, etc. .
- ★ Facilitate the group work. Create 'sharing moments' within these groups; create peer to peer sharing sessions.
- ★ Compare the results of the individuals of the group among each other, show whether they to better than others.
- ★ Give those who are committed and 'in action' immediate rewards when they carry out the desired behaviour, or parts of it.
- ★ Let 'important' messengers show their respect for those committed, when carrying out the desired behaviour or parts of it.
- ★ Award individuals when carrying out the desired behaviour and share the reward moments

### 12 And, ensure to have arranged

- ★ Brainstorm about possible barriers influencing the success of the event. Mostly 'materialistic' barriers, like the accessibility of the location, the available budget, the availability of the desired speakers, etc. Take away all barriers that can be taken away, find solutions how to deal with those non-influential barriers.
- ★ Make clear agreements with the directly involved organisations, to ensure the support the audience needs to continue working towards the desired behaviour. Think of vocational service providers, experts in analysing workplaces, job coaches etc. They should be 'ready' when contacted by an interested employer.
- ★ Support these directly involved organisations by sharing with them all ingredients suitable when working closely together with the employers to increase the chance of recruiting personnel with a disability.
- ★ When sending information:
  - ensure this information matches the requests of the employer
  - provide the information in such a way that it is understandable and clear for the employer
  - use language matching the language of the employer

**Now it is time to start to plan and organise!**



Inclusion simply makes great enterprises



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